obstructive reno-vascular lesion is present which creates the impression of volume depletion at the renin secretion site (the juxta-glomerular apparatus). The diagnosis is further supported if the renin in the renal vein blood from the suspect kidney is at least one and a half times as concentrated as that in the venous blood from the other kidney. On the other hand, the aldosterone-secreting tumor of the adrenal inhibits the release of renin by preventing the normal stimuli. Thus, if renin secretion remains low despite sodium depletion, potassium supplementation and exercise, the diagnosis of an aldosteronoma is supported.

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The Clinical Use of Propranolol

Propranolol reduces rhythmicity and myocardial contractility by blocking the cardiac beta-adrenergic receptor sites. The ventricular rate has been shown to be significantly reduced in atrial tachycardias, flutter, and fibrillation by oral or parenteral administration. Hypertensive patients have demonstrated systolic and diastolic pressure reductions of approximately 10 mm (mercury) with 120 mg per day orally. Coronary artery disease patients have observed increased exercise tolerance and diminished frequency of anginal attacks with from 40 to 160 mg per day.

The side effects of severe bradycardia, gastrointestinal pain, and congestive failure have been noted in some patients at the higher dose levels.

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Richardson DW, Freund J, Gear AS, et al: Effect of propranolol on elevated arterial blood pressure. Circulation 37:534-542, 1968

The Pathogenic Role of the EB Virus

Studies reported over the last year have strongly implicated the EB (Epstein-Barr) virus in the pathogenesis of infectious mononucleosis. The agent is not antigenically related to any known herpes virus but has been also isolated from Burketts and other tumors, although here there is no convincing evidence for its etiologic role. Infectious mononucleosis only occurs in antibody-negative persons and after this disease antibody titers which are elevated for life, can be sensed by complement fixation and indirect fluorescent antibody assay. Antigen associated with the agent has been seen in white blood cells during infectious mononucleosis and typical symptomatology was produced in a single patient by administration of the EB virus.

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Amniocentesis

For the woman who has produced anti-Rh antibody a major problem is death of her offspring, either intrauterine or shortly postpartum. A major factor in outcome of the pregnancy is the estimation of the degree of affliction of the fetus. Examination of amniotic fluid has contributed greatly to the solution of this problem.

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